

*Burushaski Grammar*

162

account of 512 Burushaski-speakers recorded in the 1931 Census as resident in the Gilgit Wazarat, and one as resident in North Kashmir. The total thus becomes 20,813<sup>1</sup>.

The local distribution of these linguistic groups has now to be considered. On examination it will be found that they fall in the main within definite and unbroken geographical limits. In Hunza from the North southwards down the Herber valley, to and including Galmit the population are Wakhis, speaking Wakhi, with the exception of the inhabitants of Khudābād (population 97), Nazimābād (82) and Mingār (174). Proceeding down, southwards and westwards, through Hunza, the rest of the population are Burushaski-speaking with the exception of the two villages, Hindi (977) and Māyūn (207) whose primary language is Shina.

In Nagir there are no Wakhi-speakers, but the Burushaski-Shina dividing line falls at practically the same point as in Hunza, viz. at Minapin opposite Hindi. From and including Minapin down the valley, with the exception of Sikandarābād (406, a recent settlement) and Chalt (587), the people of Nagir are primarily Shina-speakers.

162

● 191

It is to be remarked, however, that these radical linguistic distinctions are to a large extent masked, if not superficially deleted, by bilingualism. I believe that all Shina-speakers of both Hunza and Nagir readily understand and speak Burushaski. This is not so with the Wakhis, of whom only a few know the language of their neighbours. On the other hand the Wakhis have imposed their own language on the Burusho settled in Shimshal, and Wakhi elements are to be found in place-names in all the northern part of the country.

563

How far do these linguistic divisions represent also ethnic divisions? Are the Wakhi-speakers (Guwicho, eg. Gulta, Guwācho, Gu.ita), the Burushaski-speakers (Burūsho, eg. Burūshin, Burūto, Burūkin) and the Shina-speakers (eg. and pl. Shēn, Šēn) to be regarded as racially distinct peoples?

<sup>1</sup> The figure 26,076 given in the Kashmir Census Report 1931, Vol. XXV p. 237, appears to be incorrect. It is still incorrect if the figures for Warchikwar are taken into account.

after the usual greetings, he asked how Cec was doing. 122

"He seems to be quite a bit better today!"

"I'm awfully sorry he had to leave last night," said the Mir.

I didn't think he'd even noticed it—but he had.

"The doctor is up visiting him now," I told him. "He said he would join us in a few minutes."

"What does he usually have for breakfast?" the Mir asked me.

"Oatmeal, poached or soft boiled eggs, toast, jam and coffee would be wonderful if they are available."

"Not only is it available," said the Mir, "it is ready, for that is part of the breakfast we usually prepare for our guests. It will be taken up to him immediately."

A signal and a few words in Burushaski and Cecil's breakfast was well on its way up.

So we had breakfast in the dining room and chatted 124 and I sought to make every moment count by asking questions that were vital to me . . . that is, questions about Hunza.

I am quite sure that the Rapi understood most of the things that we talked about. She could not have been shamming as she looked both interested and charming while the conversation went on. [191] ●

"I have arranged for an interpreter to accompany 124 you on your trips and you can go wherever you like, 115 providing you can get through and the roads are open," 191 the Mir told us.

Shortly after, Sultan Ali appeared. He was the schoolmaster and also taught the Mir's children at home. He was to be our interpreter and guide. He was a slender, handsome young man. I'd judge his age as being in the early twenties. His command of English was very good. But I don't think his English was up to the standard spoken by the Mir, who spoke so fluently

124

115

● 191

that one would never believe that it was only a secondary language to him.

231

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"You know," I said to the Mir, "one of the things that I wanted to see when I came to Hunza was a yak. I understand from my readings that yaks are used in this part of the country and I have been looking everywhere as I walked along the road to Baltit, but I have as yet seen no sign of a yak!"

"That is not hard to explain," the Mir said. "The yaks are further up in the mountains. They cannot stand the heat and we keep them in the higher altitudes where they can be comfortable. If they are brought to the lower altitudes, they suffer. They like to be up around 11,000 feet or higher."

"Well, then how can I get up to see them?" I asked. "I don't mind if I have to walk for a day or two, but see them I must!"

"I'll do better than that," said the Mir. "I will phone and have two yaks brought down as quickly as possible. They will have to come from Passu which is about 38 miles from here. I will have action taken at once and see that the yaks are provided."

115

124

(Does that not indicate to you the kind of man and host was the Mir of Hunza?)

I then took my leave of the Mir and the Rani and went out with Sultan Ali and Jahangir to look, see, pry and ask questions.

344

644

Our first jaunt was a good stiff climb to the old palace located about two miles from the Mir's new palace. As the crow would fly I'm sure it would not have been more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile. But in order to get up there one has to wend and weave and climb slowly.

I was now becoming quite accustomed to the altitude. Kerimabad is up about 8500 feet and I am sure